

Chapman, Murray and others. Would it not be a good thing if each society could have fifty or more copies of such books to be used by its members and others that might be interested in good literature?

Well, each society can have such by a very little work. Bro. Gnagey told you how on last page of EVANGELIST for November 8th. Look up that EVANGELIST or write to Bro. Gnagey. I should like to see those fifty-seven books in every society. Why may it not be so? Quite a number of them I have already read and can therefore with safety recommend them to you.

#### The EVANGELIST in Every Society

How many societies are paying for one subscription to the EVANGELIST, the paper to be the property of the society and to be used for such purpose only. The notes on the topics prepared by Bro. Yoder are the best in that line, that I have seen anywhere and I have access to most of the papers that attempt to give aid upon the topics used in Young Peoples' Societies. Besides, we hope to have, next year, an article each week to accompany Bro. Yoder's notes. These articles will be written by the very best men we have in the church. Every society should therefore be a subscriber to the EVANGELIST. When the society is done with it you can give it to some member too poor to subscribe for it, or you can place it in some reading room or Railroad depot. This would be practical mission work besides it would be a help to our publishing interest.

WM. D. FURRY.

#### CONFIRMATION

J. A. MILLER

The Brethren Church teaches and practices the rite of Confirmation or the laying of hands of the elders or presbytery.

This rite follows baptism as soon as possible at a suitable time and place. In the apostolic age the imposition of hands followed baptism either immediately, as in Acts 19:5, or as a later complement, as in Acts 8:15-17. And according to Heb. 6:2 it is one of the fundamental principles of the teachings of Christ and is complementary to baptism.

#### THE PROMISE

St. Peter declared on the day of Pentecost that thro repentance and baptism remission of sins is received and that the gift of the Holy Spirit is received by those whose sins are remitted, for "The promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." Acts 2:38, 39.

And this promise, that the Holy Spirit should dwell in and abide with the individual believer, in all its manifested ways of fulfillment during the Apostolic age is still a living promise. Whatever of the Spirit's leading one may have to be brought to repentance, whatever of the Spirit's empowering to have faith and of the Spirit's grace in baptism,—this one is yet to receive the *anointing* and *sealing* of the Holy Spirit, II Cor. 1:21,

22; Eph. 1:13, 14; 3:16; 4:30; I John 2:27. Indeed, he is now ready to be sealed by the Holy Ghost of promise, Heb. 6:2. Confirmation is the form of the doctrine here set forth, the rite which symbolizes this, one of the most beautiful and impressive and blessed of all the outward means of grace given the Church.

#### A FIRST PRINCIPLE

From a careful and impartial interpretation of Heb. 6:1, 2 we are compelled to accept "the laying on of hands" as one of the fundamentals of the doctrine of Christ. The order of first Christian principles as here enumerated corresponds to and may be illustrated by the teachings of the apostles in the Acts. Mark the order.

2. The doctrine of Repentance.
2. The doctrine of Faith.
4. The doctrine of Baptism.
4. The doctrine of the Laying on of Hands, or sealing of the Holy Ghost.
5. The doctrine of the Resurrection and Judgment.

The inspired writer in Hebrew was not speaking in reference to the ordination of officers. He was talking, from ch. 5:12, of spiritual growth and power. He declares that the foundation of the Christian life is laid but once; that the first principles ought to require teaching but once; and that perfection in the Christian life is attained *after* the first principles, having been mastered, are succeeded by the exercise of their higher powers, Heb. 5:14. The fourth principle here stated is of the same category as the rest. If so, it is general, rather than local; obligatory, not optional; permanent, not occasional.

#### THE SERVICE

At a convenient time after baptism, in the public assembly of the church usually, this rite is observed. From the references in Acts 8:14-17; 19:6; Heb. 6:2, we think the following to be the proper order of observing this rite:

1. An appropriate prayer,—all kneeling with the pastor or elder.
2. A few words of instruction and exhortation to those to be confirmed.
3. Then each one kneeling before the pastor or elder, he laying his hands upon the head, shall be confirmed by the use of a suitable invocation.

## The Christian Life

#### The Deliverance

Within myself no resting place I find—

A frail bark tossed about from wave to wave  
Upon that sea whose farthest shore's the grave.  
One tells me: "Soul, be to thy fate resigned;  
Cast off the shackles which thy spirit bind;  
Reck not of any wind or tide; be brave."  
Such counsel fails to cheer me; still I crave  
Some surer comfort for my heart and mind.

Darker the night before the break of day;  
I cry for rescue from the raging waste;  
The angry billows fill me with dismay;  
I'm lost! O Jesus, to my help make haste!  
A light—a Voice amid the storm's alarms—  
I'm safe within the haven of his arms!

—N. Y. Observer.

#### PRAYER MEETING TOPICS

##### THE PROPHETS—MALACHI. NO. I

#### I. Prophets.

- a. Nothing is known of his history.
- b. Probable, from the references in his prophecy that he was a priest.
- c. Date, B. C. 420—397.
- d. Political conditions surrounding, (1) Nehemiah absent at the court of Axtaxerxes. (2) The same abuses are mentioned by both Nehemiah and Malachi. Mal. 2:8. Neh. 13:15, 29. Mal. 2:10, 16. Neh. 13:23, 29. (3) In Greece the first Peloponnesian war was raging. Thus as the people of Israel were waning to decline Greece was just coming to the pugilistic period of youth. (4) Edom, probably just recently destroyed. Mal. 1:3. See Obadiah.

#### II. Prophecy.

a. Analysis. (1) Chapter 1, 2:1, 10 is given up to reproof of the priests as the leaders of the people from God. (2) Chap. 2:11, 17 contains a rebuke of the commonness of divorce and against marriage with heathens. (3) Chapters 3, 4 is a prophecy concerning the messenger of the great day of the Lord.

b. Subject matters of his denunciations, (1) The nation is reproofed for failing to respond to God's love for them. (2) The priests had despised God's name. Chap. 1:6 (3) They had offered polluted bread, i. e., damaged offerings, on God's altar. Chap. 1:7, 8. (4) They had offered to God what they would not have dared to give their governor. How like these are some people today! (5) The priests would not even attend to the trivial duty of shutting the temple doors for nothing. Chap. 1:10. Or, that verse may mean that they would better close up the temple than to have services in that manner. (6) They counted God's service a weariness, and God's reward for service "contemptible." Chap. 1:12, 13. O preachers, let us never think God's service a weariness, but a glad one. O Christians, I wonder if you sometimes think the services of God's house wearisome and the rewards you receive contemptible! Jer. 23:33, 40. (7) Formality in doing religious duties. (8) Treachery of the priests in dealing with men. Chap. 2:10. (9) The people had divorced their Jewish wives that they might marry heathen women. Chap. 2:11, 13. (10) They had wearied God with their unbelieving and murmuring words. Chap. 2:17; 3:13-15. O, how many of us in the church of Christ are so faithless that we look with envy on the prosperity of the wicked, and think they are favored of God. On this see, Ps. 37. (11) They had been guilty of sorcery, adultery, false swearing, oppression of the hireling, the widow and the orphans, had cheated the strangers and had not feared God. Chap. 3:5. Rev. 21:8. (12) They had robbed God by refusing to bring in to Him the tithes and offerings. Chap. 3:8, 12.

J. L. GILLIN.

Righteousness needs no interpreter.